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Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8298th meeting
Thursday, 28 June 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Polyanskiy	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Djédjé
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Tenya
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2018/541)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Letter from Ms. Salamata Drame Tanoh-Boutchoue, addressed to the members of the Security Council

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform Council members that I have received a letter from Ms. Salamata Drame Tanoh-Boutchoue, spouse of the late Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Mr. Bernard Tanoh-Boutchoue, addressed to all members of the Council. As the letter is written in French, I shall read it out in that language.

(*spoke in French*)

> "As you know, my husband, His Excellency Bernard Tanoh-Boutchoue, passed away on 18 April 2018. He was for each of you a colleague, a friend, a brother. From the announcement of his death until the departure of his remains to Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire, you have never tired in showing us your solidarity and your compassion. I thank you infinitely.
>
> "I would like to inform you that the funeral went well in Abidjan. With the support of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Alassane Ouattara, and the Ivorian Government, Bernard was accompanied with all honours to his final resting place on 26 May, 2018. He is now at rest in his native village, Grand Lahou, in the south of Côte d'Ivoire.
>
> "The children of Bernard — Charles, Thierry and Marie Fatimé — myself and our entire family in Côte d'Ivoire have been deeply touched by your marks of sympathy.
>
> "Before leaving New York, I wanted to express our deep gratitude and appreciation on behalf of the Tanoh-Boutchoue family.
>
> "You should know that Bernard had great admiration and consideration for each of you. I know that he would have liked to say to you: 'Look at the life I am starting and not that which I have finished, because I fought the good fight. I finished the race. I kept the faith'.
>
> "In closing, I would like to urge you to continue fighting the good fight for a more just world, a world of peace."

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2018/541)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2018/639, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/541, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, France, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2423 (2018).

I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the vote.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to begin by telling the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire how deeply moved I have been by the letter that has just been read out and how profoundly present our late colleague remains in our memory and our hearts. His wisdom, as reported by his spouse, is and will remain a source of inspiration to us.

France welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2423 (2018), renewing the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for a period of one year.

Let us be blunt — this renewal is not like the previous ones. It is accompanied by a strong political message to the Malian parties that maintaining the current configuration of a mission as important and exposed as MINUSMA must necessarily be accompanied by substantial progress in the peace process. The resolution we have just adopted therefore sets out a precise list of priority measures — taken directly from the road map approved by the Malian parties — whose implementation will be followed with the greatest attention. It asks the Secretary-General to provide an update on that implementation in a specific report six months after the inauguration of the next President of Mali. It expresses the Council's intention to seek options for a possible significant adaptation of MINUSMA in the absence of substantial progress in the implementation of these priority measures. Lastly, it emphasizes that the non-implementation of the road map provisions by the announced deadline would also lead the Council to consider sanctions against those responsible for setting up those obstacles.

Everyone must therefore assume their responsibilities for creating conditions conducive to maintaining the exceptional level of international commitment enjoyed by Mali. That will be possible only with the urgent and unprecedented mobilization of the Malian parties for the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. The progress made in recent weeks is encouraging, but it must imperatively be continued and amplified.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Secretary-General and the conclusions of the strategic review, resolution 2423 (2018) provides MINUSMA with a clearer and more realistic mandate through greater prioritization of its tasks. It recognizes that the Mission is intended to interact with the other security presence deployed in the Malian theatre — the Malian armed forces, the Joint Force, of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the European missions and Operation Barkhane —whose actions are mutually reinforcing. It asks MINUSMA to better inform local actors about the characteristics and specificities of its mandate. It invites the Secretary-General to take further steps to strengthen the security of the Mission, which is our shared priority, while welcoming the progress made in recent months in implementing the recommendations of the report prepared by Lieutenant General (Retired) Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz, entitled "Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers". Finally, it calls on MINUSMA and the Malian Government to take fully into account in their actions the security impacts of climate change and other environmental factors.

The text we have just adopted also expresses the Council's collective concern with regard to the ongoing deterioration of the situation in the centre and the threats it poses to the protection of civilians. It recalls that only a balanced approach, combining security response and development and governance efforts, can create the conditions for sustainable stabilization. It expresses serious concern about the allegations of human rights violations attributed to the Malian armed forces and notes with satisfaction the measures announced by the Malian authorities in this regard, while underlining the importance of their rapid and full implementation.

Finally, resolution 2243 (2018) recalls the need for future elections to be held in ways that guarantee the credibility of their results. It lends its full support to the good offices played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in recent weeks, and calls for the continuation of a constructive dialogue between the Government and the opposition on all of these issues.

Before concluding, I wish to reaffirm here our unwavering support for the irreplaceable role played by the International Criminal Court in favour of peace and security in Mali. The conviction of the jihadist Al-Mahdi for attacks on the cultural and religious heritage of Timbuktu, as well as the forthcoming trial of Al Hassan Ag Abdoul Aziz Ag Mohamed Ag Mahmoud for crimes committed during the occupation of northern Mali by jihadist groups, testify to the concrete contribution of the Court to the fight against impunity in Mali. The resolution that we have adopted today calls on the Malian authorities to pursue their righteous cooperation with the Court, in accordance with their obligations under the Rome Statute. That is an absolutely essential point on the road to lasting stability in Mali.

Finally, I want to warmly thank all members of the Security Council for the open and constructive spirit they demonstrated throughout the negotiations. The unity that traditionally characterizes the Council on the Malian file is a major asset, enabling us to continue to play a decisive role in favour of peace and security in that country. We must do everything we can to maintain and make the most of it. That is the logic with which the resolution we adopted today is fully in line.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): The United States would like to thank France, the penholder, and all our Council colleagues for their collaboration in renewing one of the world's largest peacekeeping missions.

As Mali prepares for presidential elections in a few short weeks, the people of Mali find themselves at another significant crossroads. We have sought in resolution 2423 (2018) to find the best way to frame the role of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in Mali's present and future. Peacekeeping missions are not indefinite, nor should they be. This one, founded in 2013, which we have now renewed for another year, will not be in Mali forever. It is there to do one thing above all — to support the implementation of the 2015 Algiers Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali as a way to achieve durable and lasting political solutions there.

The Mission cannot achieve that alone. For years, various parties have stalled that process while the world has waited and the security situation has deteriorated. That is why this year's resolution makes clear to the parties that without significant progress on their part, we will be forced to look at options to overhaul the Mission. We agree that there has been some progress in implementing the accord over the past few months, but we should be much closer to full implementation, and we must see progress now. For the Council and Mali's many friends, who have made a significant financial and strategic investment in the country, the resolution makes it clear that we can accept no further delay.

With the resolution, we have also streamlined the mandate, emphasized the primacy of the Mission's political engagement, and stressed the importance of outreach and engagement for the protection of civilians. We have called on the Mission to develop better strategic messaging so that Malians understand that MINUSMA is there to bring peace and stability and to work with others in the development, security and political sectors to help Mali succeed.

Many Malians, and MINUSMA's peacekeepers, face life-and-death realities every day, contending with terrorist attacks, escalating intercommunal violence and — increasingly — human rights violations and abuses by Mali's security forces. The rising number of extrajudicial killings and mass graves in places like Boulikessi, Diourra, Koumaga, Nantaka and Ménaka must be reversed. Human rights violations and abuses by security forces only serve to fuel violence, instability and recruitment to terrorist organizations. In the resolution, the Council is united in declaring that respect for human rights and accountability are not optional. Violations by security forces have consequences.

I would like to note that in the twenty-second preambular paragraph and in paragraph 61, the resolution includes the words "in matters that are within its jurisdiction" in reference to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The United States interprets those words to mean in matters that are within the ICC's jurisdiction under international law. We note that Mali is a State party to the Rome Statute, has consented to ICC jurisdiction and has self-referred its situation to the ICC, pursuant to article 14 of the Rome Statute. As we have stated previously, the United States respects the decisions of those nations that have chosen to join the ICC, and in turn we expect that our decision not to join and not to place our citizens under the Court's jurisdiction will also be respected.

We look forward to successful elections, to the next President's full commitment to the peace accord, and to the parties' swift and significant progress towards its implementation. Their collective effort is the only way to achieve the political solutions that the people of Mali deserve on their way to a brighter future.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): We welcome the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2423 (2018), renewing the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for another 12 months. We thank France, as the penholder, for facilitating the negotiations on the text, and we appreciate the flexibility and compromise of all members, which facilitated the resolution's unanimous adoption.

In spite of enormous challenges and constraints, MINUSMA peacekeepers are doing commendable work in supporting the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. We welcome the recent positive steps taken in the implementation of the Agreement ahead of the electoral cycle due to take place in Mali this year. We are confident that the Government of Mali and the Platform and Coordination armed groups will take all the steps necessary to fully and expeditiously deliver on their remaining obligations under the Agreement, as stipulated in the resolution that we just adopted.

We appreciate the continued support of MINUSMA, in cooperation with other international partners, to the efforts of the Malian authorities to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime, including information- and intelligence-sharing, planning, training and capacity-building. The role of MINUSMA continues to be vital, and the extension of its mandate for another 12 months, in line with the recommendations of the Secretary-General, is very welcome.

We have taken the right decision and, as we have always reiterated, the international community has a heavy responsibility to help Mali overcome its current security challenges. We all remember how Mali was an example of democratic governance in Africa before 2011. We are very hopeful that it will rise again.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

Russia supported the Council's adoption today of resolution 2423 (2018), which extends the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Our decision was based on the importance of maintaining consensus in the Security Council and on the understanding that in helping the Malian authorities to rectify the situation in the country, MINUSMA is carrying out a very important task. However, our agreement with the resolution does not mean that we are willing to subscribe to a number of its provisions. In particular, we oppose the use of the term "intelligence" in relation to the mandate of peacekeepers, based on the fact that the terminology should correspond exactly to the words of the report of the General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/72/19).

We would like to draw the Council's attention to the resolution's provisions on climate and ecological issues. We believe that this issue, as it has always been, comes under the purview of the relevant bodies of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Let us not poach from them. Besides that, the Council has neither the mandate nor the necessary expertise to deal with such issues. Its main aim, as established in the Charter of the United Nations, is to examine issues that directly relate to peace and security. Unfortunately, our reasoning on this, which other delegations also talked about during the negotiations on the resolution, was not taken into consideration. This is therefore another de facto case of penholders abusing their rights. We believe that a note by the President of the Security Council aimed at a fair distribution of the relevant powers would be a good tool for rectifying this situation. The Russian delegation has circulated such a document and submitted it to the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.